

## **RESPONSE TO PUBLIC COMMENT ON FIRST DRAFT**

### **GENERAL**

Throughout development of the second draft, any detail-oriented comments on the first draft were usually integrated into the text. Changes to wording or definition of technical terms submitted by experts replaced existing language. Other technical comments, such as those which questioned the validity of statistical figures, graphs or statements, were re-confirmed by the staff and kept in the text if verifiable. Attention to an individual's specific comments occurred at every stage of the process. The following reviews responses to general public comment:

To address the complexity of the document, management actions were defined more clearly in the second draft. The structure of the text was modified to be more explanatory. Some technical background information was taken out and placed in an appendix. Many of the regulatory recommendations were modified to be more incentive-based. Some management actions were redrafted to accommodate concerns of user groups who presented substantive rebuttal. For example, an action requiring logging operators to file a notice of intent to harvest was removed. An action calling for mandatory land use planning was transformed into incentives for county planners to integrate environmental planning into economic development plans, and providing grant funding for them to do so.

### **WATER QUALITY PLAN**

In the Water Quality Plan, the most controversial item was the recommendation for mandatory 20-foot vegetative buffer strips along all estuarine/river shorelines. The buffer strips had been recommended as a best management practice (BMP) that would cost-effectively control nutrient and sediment pollution in the region's waters. This action was both supported and opposed. Many people who desired strong controls for water quality supported the buffers but cited research demonstrating that buffers of at least 50 feet were needed to ensure adequate protection. Others were concerned that mandatory buffers would limit the use of their land. They considered the action a taking of property and would therefore require compensation. The 20-foot buffer strips remained in the Plan at this stage.

In addressing other water quality concerns, most mandatory programs were modified to encourage resource managers to develop interagency policies or better integrate best management practices.

### **VITAL TERRESTRIAL AREAS AND WETLANDS ACTION PLAN**

Many of the suggestions given for this section were taken into consideration. Responses to public comment took the form of changes to wording or structure of the document. Many clarifications to the actions were added to dispel fears of hidden agendas.

### **IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**

Instead of just departmental representatives, the new implementation structure included a "Coordinating Council" which had broader representation and was intended to work in tandem with three other advisory councils -- a Local Government Advisory Council, a Citizen's Advisory Council and Technical Advisory Council. Each advisory council would have representation on the Coordinating Council.